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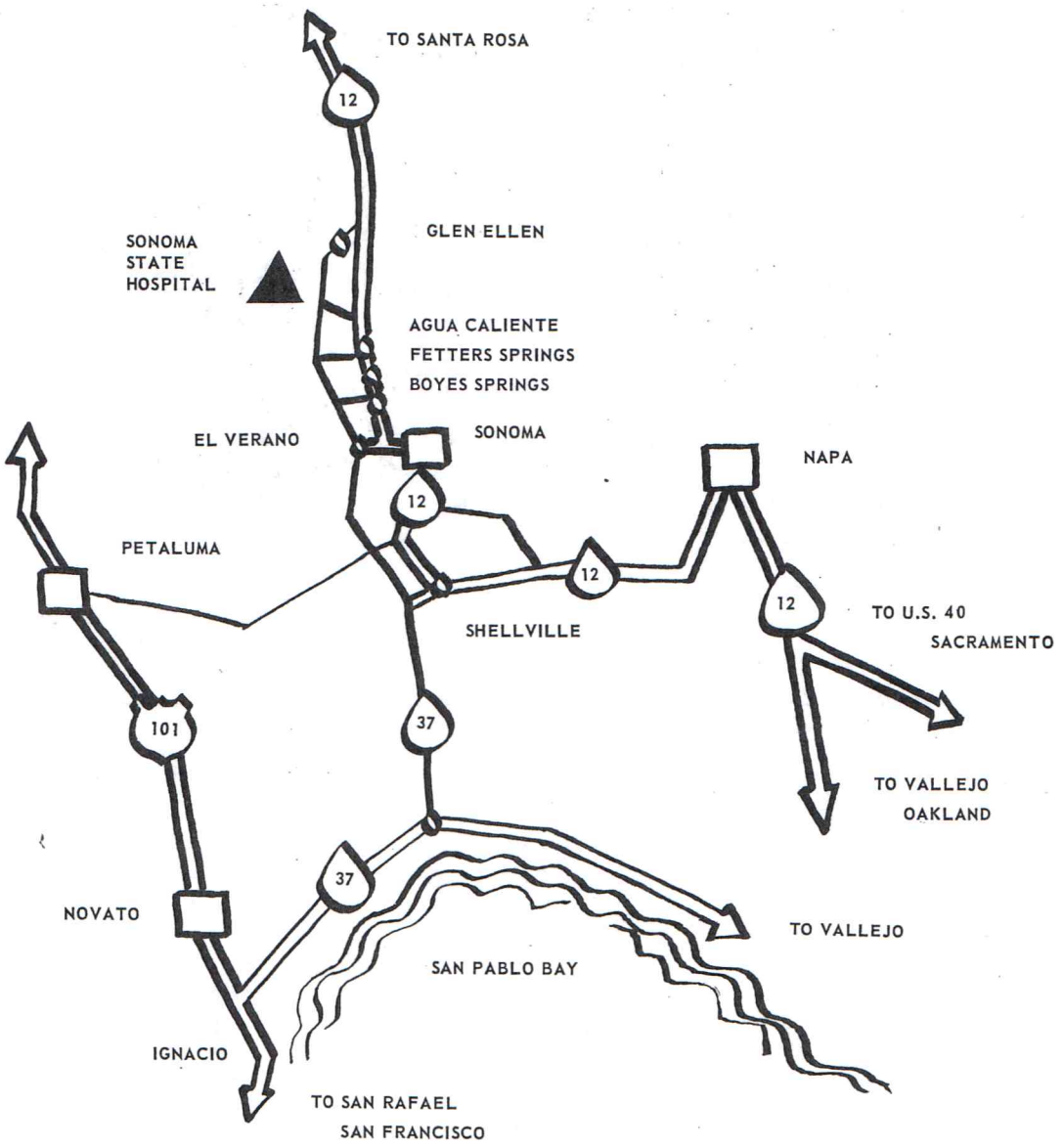
CALIFORNIA STATE ARCHIVES
1020 "O" STREET
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814

Sonoma State Hospital
Parents Handbook

VOLUNTEERS FOR INSTITUTIONAL AID *Sonoma State Hospital*

For further information contact the volunteer office.



MAP TO SONOMA STATE HOSPITAL

We encourage you to secure all information possible concerning what both the hospital and community can offer you and your child before making the decision to commit your child to Sonoma. It is only with all the information available that you will be able to make the best decision possible.

Attached to this is a map of the roads to the hospital.

Please leave packages containing such things as clothing and personal items at the ward office, where the contents will be properly listed. It is suggested that gifts to patients be limited to items which will not be harmful. Such things as soft rubber toys, stuffed animals, dolls and books should be suitable, but objects which are made of metal and have sharp edges, or contain glass, should not be selected as gifts for the patients.

Please save embarrassment to all concerned by not offering employees gratuities or presents.

III. CORRESPONDENCE:

Letters mean a great deal to a patient. Frequent letters to patients from their relatives and friends are welcome and patients are encouraged to reply. Employees will assist them in reading and writing letters. Relatives should supply stamps whenever possible. Letters and packages for the patients are addressed directly to the patients. Please enclose in each package a list of contents. Please do not send letters or packages to Sonoma State Hospital when there are contagious diseases in your home.

All incoming and outgoing mail is examined for the protection of the patients.

When writing to any member of the hospital staff regarding a patient, please address your letters to the Superintendent and Medical Director.

GENERAL

It is estimated that there are four hundred and fifty thousand retarded individuals in California! The hospital can only take care of those for whom no other service exists.

Many agencies in your community are becoming more and more aware of the problem. Most communities now have Point 1 classes in the public schools for the educable retarded child, and some have Point 2 classes in the public schools for the trainable child. A few communities are starting nursery schools and sheltered workshops. These services make it possible for many families to keep their children at home for longer periods of time. The decision of what is best for your child in not an easy one, but is one that only you as parents can make. We have tried here to present something of the hospital and its program. If more information is needed, please visit us and discuss it with some member of our Pre-admission and Diagnostic Service. Your local Parents' Group, the County Health Department, the County Probation Office, Welfare Department and/or Bureau of Social Work of the Department of Mental Hygiene can usually tell you what will be available for your child in the local community.

2. PATIENTS' BENEFIT FUND: This fund is available for use in increasing the welfare of the patients. It may be used for ward parties, to purchase needed articles for patients without funds, for putting on special Christmas and other holiday programs, etc. It is dependent on the profits of the Eldridge Store and on donations to it by interested friends of the hospital. Make out donations to "Sonoma State Hospital Patients' Benefit Fund."

3. SONOMA STATE HOSPITAL RESEARCH FUND: This fund is also supported by contributions from interested friends of the hospital and relatives' legacies. It is used to purchase materials for the hospital's research program which are not available through state funds and to support research done by the hospital staff within the field of mental retardation. Many relatives, in setting up "trust funds" for a patient's personal fund, have made arrangements so that whatever is left on the patient's demise goes to this fund as a memorial. Make out donations to "Sonoma State Hospital Research Fund."

4. FOOD: Please limit the food given to the patient to an amount which can be consumed during visiting hours. If an excess amount of food, candy or other edibles is sent to a patient, after his needs have been satisfied, the remainder is divided among his friends in the cottage, This disposition is necessary because there are no facilities to care for additional food. No food should be taken to a patient who is ill.

5. CLOTHING: Many parents like to provide clothing for their children. We welcome this but often it is easier for us if the hospital furnishes the every-day clothing, since personal clothing requires individual name tags. Dress up clothing, coats, etc., are hard for the hospital to furnish and we encourage parents to provide these. We welcome donations of clothing in good condition. Persons who wish to make donations should contact the Coordinator of Volunteer Services.